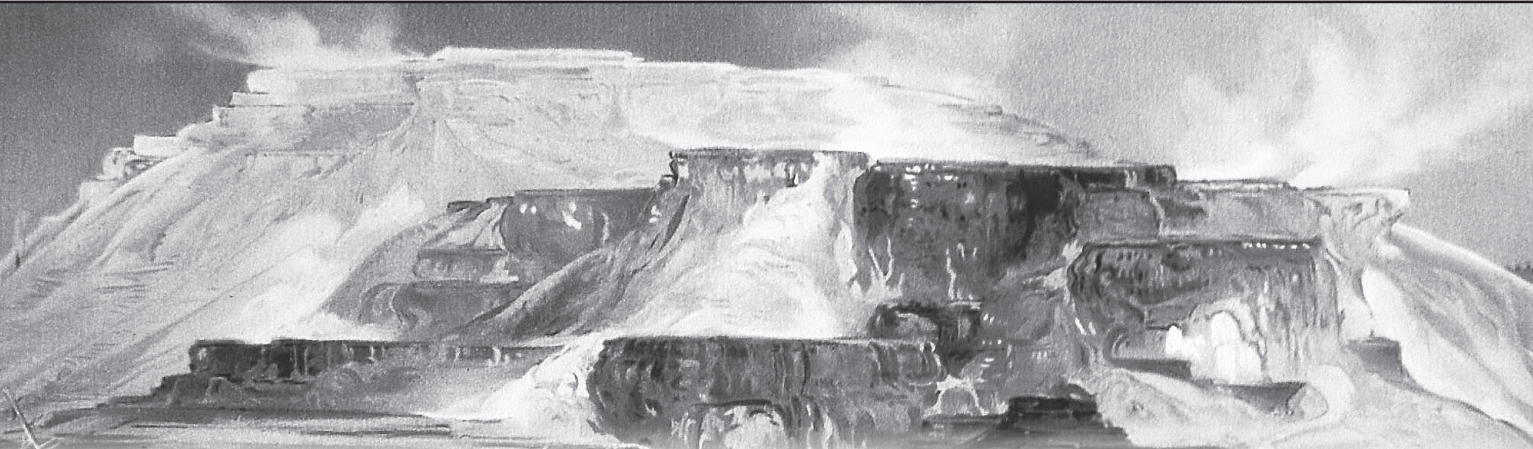


Mammoth Area Day Hikes

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yellowstone National Park



Welcome to the Mammoth Hot Springs Area

Numerous trails suitable for short or extended hikes into Yellowstone’s backcountry begin in the Mammoth area. This guide introduces you to eight hikes selected by park rangers. Always carry rain gear, extra food and water, and other emergency equipment when venturing into the backcountry. Be sure to obtain current trail condition and bear activity information at visitor centers.

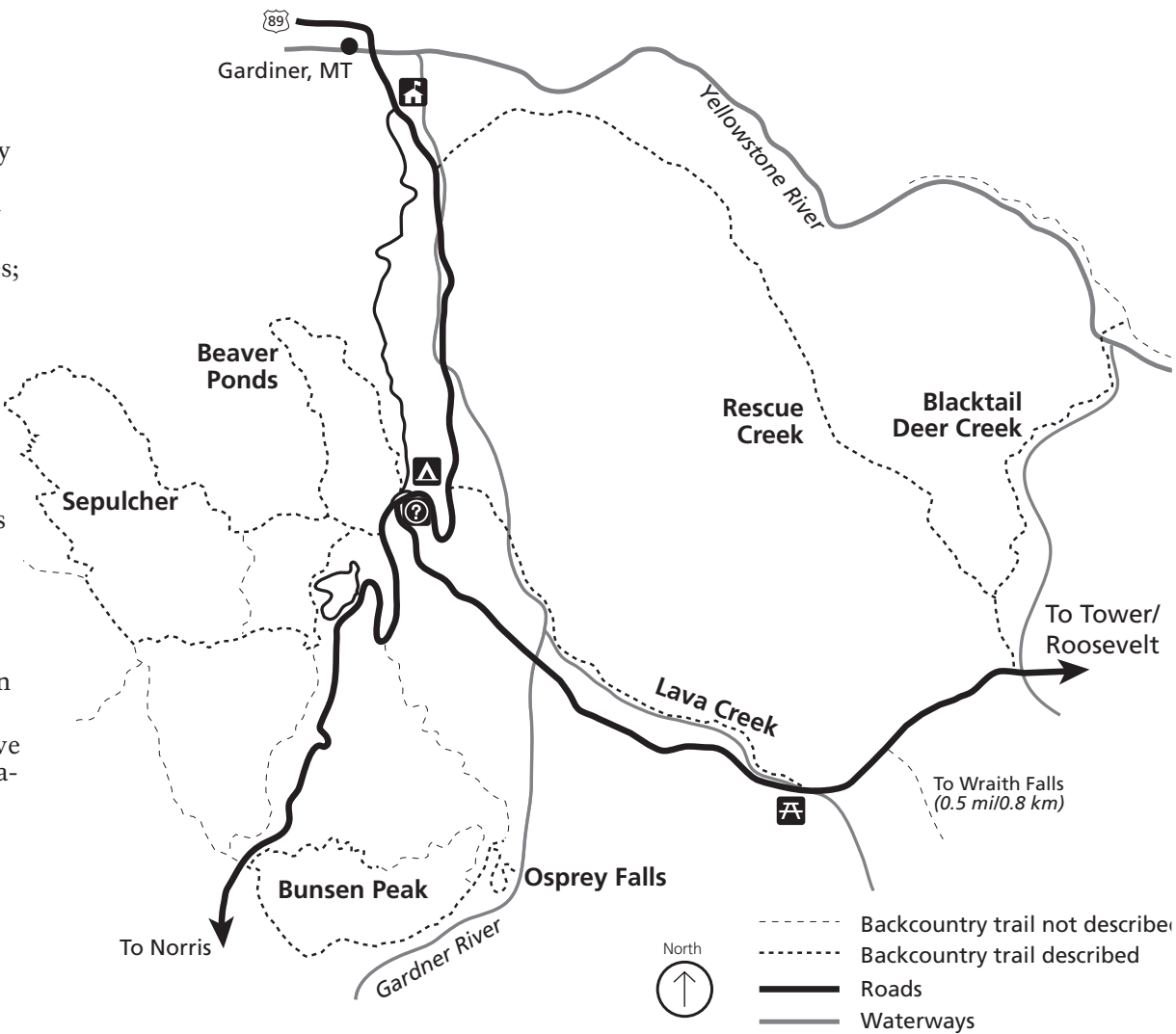
Cautions

Hydrothermal areas: The thin ground in these areas breaks easily, and often overlies scalding water. Stay on the trail.

All Wildlife: You must stay at least 100 yards (91 m) away from bears and wolves; and at least 25 yards (23 m) away from all other animals—including birds.

Bears: Although your chance of an encounter is low, your safety is not guaranteed. Minimize your risks by making loud noises, shouting, or singing. Hike in groups and use caution where vision is obstructed. Do not hike after dark. Avoid carcasses; bears often defend this source of food.

Elevation: This area is above 7,000 feet (2,132 m) in elevation; even short walks can be strenuous. Allow plenty of time and carry plenty of water.



Beaver Ponds Loop

Distance: 5 miles (8 km)

Estimated time: 2–3 hours

Difficulty: moderately strenuous

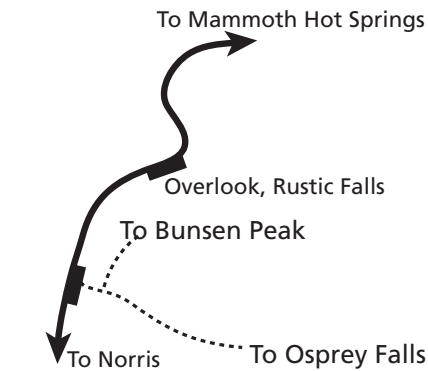
Trailhead: between Liberty Cap and the stone house next to the Mammoth Terraces



The trail begins just north of Liberty Cap and the Mammoth Terraces, and begins with a 350 foot (106.7 m) climb up and above Clematis Gulch. At the junction with Sepulcher Mountain Trail, go right. Soon thereafter, the trail levels out and rambles through meadows and stands of aspen to a series of beaver ponds. Look for elk, mule deer, pronghorn, moose, beaver dams and lodges, the occasional beaver, and waterfowl. Be alert for bears: both black and grizzly bears forage in this area. Past the ponds, the trail travels through forest and grassland back to Mammoth.

Bunsen Peak

Distance, round trip: 4.2 miles (6.7 km)
Estimated time: 2–3 hours
Difficulty: moderately strenuous; 1,300 foot climb
Trailhead: 5 miles (8 km) south of Mammoth on the Grand Loop Road, across from the Glen Creek trailhead
Climb through forest and meadow to the summit of Bunsen Peak, which has panoramic views of the Blacktail Plateau, Swan Lake Flat, Gallatin Mountain Range, and the Yellowstone River Valley. (You'll also see communications equipment, which supplies Mammoth and nearby communities.) Return by the same route.

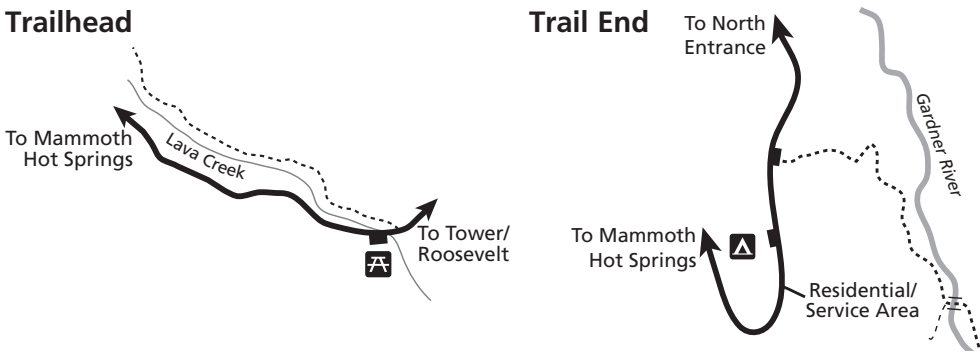


Osprey Falls

Distance, round trip: 8 miles (12.8 km)
Estimated time: 5–6 hours
Difficulty: strenuous
Trailhead: 5 miles (8 km) south of Mammoth on the Grand Loop Road, across from the Glen Creek trailhead
Follow Bunsen Peak Road (hiking/biking only) through grassland and burned forest 2½ miles (4 km) to Osprey Falls Trail (no bikes allowed). Descend 700 feet (213 m) into Sheepeater Canyon, one of the deepest canyons in Yellowstone. Osprey Falls, on the Gardner River, plunges 150 feet (46 m) over the edge of a lava flow.

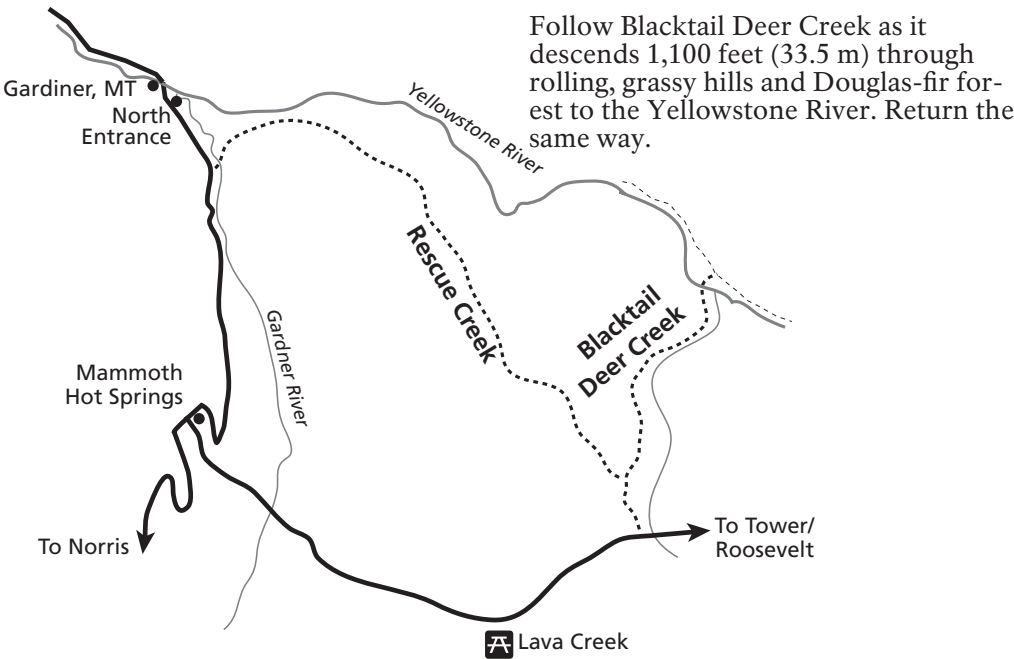
Lava Creek

Distance, one way: 3.5 miles (5.6 km)
Estimated time: 3–4 hours
Difficulty: moderately strenuous
Trailhead: Across the road from the Lava Creek picnic area on the Grand Loop Road
Follow Lava Creek downstream past Undine Falls (60 feet/18 m), descending gradually. Lava Creek meets the Gardner River further downstream. The trail crosses the river on a footbridge to a final steep climb out, ending near the Mammoth Campground.



Blacktail Deer Creek to Yellowstone River

Distance, one way: 4 miles (6.4 km)
Estimated time: 4–5 hours
Difficulty: return is strenuous
Trailhead: 7 miles (11.3 km) east of Mammoth on the Grand Loop Road
Caution
Check at a backcountry office for advice if you want to travel the Yellowstone River Trail. A portion near Gardiner is closed.

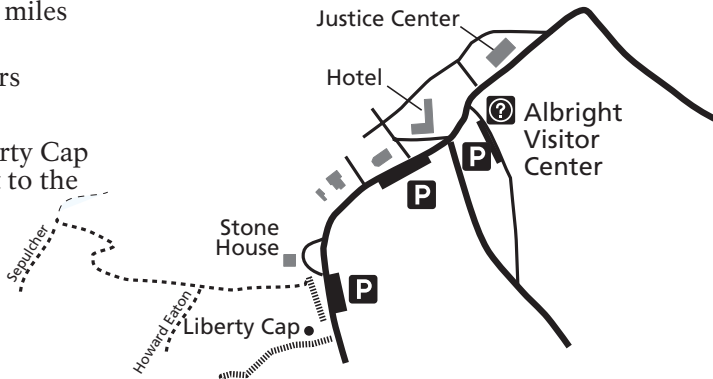


Rescue Creek

Distance, one way: 8 miles (12.8 km)
Estimated time: 5–6 hours
Difficulty: moderately strenuous
Trailhead: 7 miles (11.3 km) east of Mammoth on the Grand Loop Road; ends 1 mile (1.6 km) south of the North Entrance Station.
Trail frequented by stock animals.

Sepulcher Mountain

Distance, round trip: 11 miles (17.7 km)
Estimated time: 6–8 hours
Difficulty: strenuous
Trailhead: between Liberty Cap and the stone house next to the Mammoth Terraces



Follow the Beaver Ponds Trail (see above) to the Sepulcher Mountain Trail junction, then climb 3,400 feet (1,036 m) through forest and meadows to the 9,652 foot (2,942 m) summit. Loop trail continues along the opposite side of the mountain through an open slope to the junction of Snow Pass Trail, which descends to the Howard Eaton Trail, which goes north to Mammoth Terraces and the trailhead.

For more information
www.nps.gov/yell

Visitor centers have a free hike handout for each major area of the park. A “Day Hike Sampler,” with a hike or two per area, is also available along with several guides for trails throughout the park.